Year of the Ocean Initiative

$78 Million in FY 2000

At the 1998 National Ocean Conference in Monterey, California, President Clinton launched a series of major initiatives to explore, protect and restore America's vital ocean resources. Highlighting the important role the ocean plays in the daily lives of all Americans, the Administration introduced measures to promote new scientific insight into the oceans, sustain use of fisheries and other marine resources, provide new opportunities for economic growth, and protect fragile coastal communities and ecosystems such as coral reefs from damage and environmental degradation. NOAA's FY 2000 budget request includes $78 million to support the Year of the Ocean (YOTO) Initiative.

Safe Navigation ($5.2M)

NOAA requests an increase of $5.2 million to promote safe and efficient navigation. This balanced investment will improve the competitiveness of U.S. ports and exports while lowering the risk of marine accidents and resulting pollution. In partnership with the private sector and local authorities, NOAA will support the implementation of real-time oceanographic systems and continue to reduce a critical backlog of hydrographic surveying requirements. NOAA will continue to implement digital nautical charts and modernize the national spatial reference systems. This investment supports the Administration's Year of the Ocean "Ports for the 21st Century" initiative.

Aquaculture ($4.6M)

Wild fish stocks in the U.S. and around the world are dwindling. At the same time world demand for protein continues to rise. NOAA requests an increase of $4.6 million in. In order to promote the development of an environmentally-friendly and commercially viable domestic aquaculture industry, the budget proposes $4.6 million. Approximately $3.6 million will be used by OAR for research and development of environmentally and economically sound aquaculture technologies with a focus on peer reviewed competition to find projects that will lead to business use. NMFS will direct much of its $1.0 million toward developing aquaculture standards that protect the environment, which promote ecologically-sound farming technologies, and address site selection criteria to assist those who plan to invest in aquaculture within federal waters. These funds will further the administration's ocean stewardship mission by protecting the environment while developing sustainable aquaculture.

Ocean Climate Variability ($4.0M)

To better understand the role of oceans in shaping our weather and climate, improved measurements of ocean data are needed to track climate shifts, understand the interaction of the oceans and atmosphere, and predict severe weather and the regional impacts of global climate change. In FY 2000, NOAA is requesting $4.0 million to construct, deploy and operate an array of 1000 profiling autonomous floats for data collection in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. The floats will make real-time, basin-wide measurements of temperature and salinity profiles, and will estimate current velocities at depth. These data will be used with existing satellite and *in situ* ocean observations and weather analyses to produce the first "weather maps" of the upper ocean and associated seasonal cycles. The seasonal patterns of ocean anomalies in these maps are key to understanding and predicting the climate phenomena that affect U.S. interests at home and abroad.

Fisheries Stock Assessments and Conservation, and Management ($58.2M)

A major step forward in improving fisheries stock assessment will begin this year as the National Marine Fisheries Service invests $51.6 million on the first of four new state-of-the-art research vessels. These new vessels will be constructed to conduct essential stock assessment surveys and monitor fish and marine mammal species, assess ecological changes and provide the best available data to rebuild sustainable fisheries. These ships must be available for fisheries research missions through the first decade of the twenty-first century to protect the integrity of long-term research analyses. These new ships will complement our increasing charters with research partners in industry and academia and will modernize NOAA's aging fleet of research vessels. The budget also includes an increase of $2.6 million for NOAA to carry out its requirements of the Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Conservation Management Act. Funds will be used to conserve and manage the fisheries resources of the U.S. to prevent overfishing, to rebuild overfished stocks, to ensure conservation, and to protect essential fish habitats in order to realize the full potential of our fisheries. There is $2.0 million for observer coverage to carry out mandates in the act. NOAA will also provide $2.0 million to support work on fisheries oceanography to improve stock predictions by identifying and assessing critical environmental processes controlling long-term trends in the Nation's fishery production. A network of bio-physical moorings in the North Pacific Ocean will provide data on key oceanographic indicators and give greater insight into environmentally-induced shifts in the productivity of commercially important fish stocks.

Year of the Ocean Initiative

NOAA FY 2000 Budget Breakout of Year of the Ocean Initiative Investments

		FY 2000 Change	YOTO Investment
National Ocean Service			
Navigation Services			
Mapping and Charting		$1.0	Ports for the 21st Century
Reducing the Survey Backlog		$0.9	Ports for the 21st Century
Geodesy		$0.5	Ports for the 21st Century
Tide and Current Data		$2.8	Ports for the 21st Century
	Subtotal	$5.2	
Ocean Resources Conservation Assessment			
Ocean Assessment Program		$1.0	Exploring the Last US Frontier
		$2.0	Coral Reef Protection
	Subtotal	$3.0	
National Marine Fisheries Service			
Conservation and Management Operations			
Fisheries Management Programs		$2.6	Magnuson-Stevens Act
Observers / Training		$2.0	Observers
	Subtotal	$4.6	
Information Collection and Analysis			
Resource Information		$1.6	Fisheries Oceanography (Partner with OAR)
-		$1.0	Aquaculture (Partner with OAR)
	Subtotal	$2.6	
Oceanic & Atmospheric Research			
Climate and Air Quality Research			
Interannual and Seasonal Climate Research		$4.0	Ocean Climate Variability
Oceans and Great Lakes			
Marine Environmental Research		$3.6	Aquaculture (Partner with NMFS)
		$0.4	Fisheries Oceanography (Partner with NMFS)
		$3.1	Ocean Observatories / Exploring the Last Frontier
	Subtotal	$11.1	
Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction			
Fleet Replacement		$51.6	Fisheries Research Vessels
NOAA Year of the Ocean Initiative -- Total		**$78.1**	**(dollars in millions)**

Coral Reef Protection ($2.0M)

Coral reefs are among the most exquisite and most endangered ecosystems on Earth. As a destination for tourism, recreation and fishing, coral reefs sustain billions of dollars in economic activities. Often described as the marine equivalent of rainforests, coral reefs support a stunning diversity and abundance of undersea life. Yet around the world coral reefs are showing signs of degradation associated with pollution, development, overfishing and increasing ocean temperatures. NOAA requests $2.0 million in order to work with states, U.S. territories and commonwealths, and local communities, to carry out important research, monitoring, management and mapping of the nation's coral reef resources. These funds will be used to better understand the state of this fragile ecosystem and help identify solutions for protecting this vital resource.

Exploring Our Last Frontier/Ocean Bottom Observatories($4.1M)

As announced at the National Oceans Conference, NOAA is requesting an increase of $4.1 million to unravel deep-sea mysteries, discover new opportunities in the ocean, and better understand how to protect marine resources. These funds will launch a program to map and explore U.S. ocean waters with advanced underwater technology. It will expand activities at two existing shallow-water observatories, the Leo - off of the coast of New Jersey, and the Aquarius in the Florida Keys. The increase will also fund two new deep-sea observatories, one in the Pacific Juan deFuca Ridge and the other in the Gulf of Mexico. It will support a partnership with the National Geographic Society where high-tech submersible technologies will begin to map and explore the biodiversity of all of the National Marine Sanctuaries. Finally, to better understand the contribution that ocean resources provide to the Nation's economy, funds will also be used to assess the economic value of the domestic ocean and coastal resources.

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